

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky

Susan Nissman 818-880-9416 (o) 213-458-4222 (c)

Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas

Ed Maddox 213 974-222 (o) 213 361-6980 (c)

James Bolden 213 974-2222 (o) 213 300-5314 (c)

August 26, 2010

LA COUNTY SUPERVISORS REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO PASSING PLASTIC BAG BAN IF SACRAMENTO FAILS TO PASS AB 1998

LOS ANGELES (August 26, 2010) —Los Angeles County Supervisors Zev Yaroslavsky and Mark Ridley-Thomas today demonstrated their commitment to protect Southern California from plastic marine debris by reaffirming their support of a ban on plastic bags in Los Angeles County if the State fails to enact Assembly Bill 1998 (Brownley) —The Single-Use Bag Reduction Act.

“Los Angeles County has been at the forefront of reducing the disproportionate and costly environmental impacts of single-use plastic grocery bags, which in the last few decades have become a ubiquitous symbol of our throwaway society. We urge the legislature to pass AB 1998,” stated Supervisor Yaroslavsky.

“Local governments in Los Angeles County have spoken loud and clear –we need Sacramento to partner with us” said L.A. County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. “I urge my former colleagues in the Senate to pass this legislation to ensure California remains a leader in environmental stewardship.”

In April of 2007, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a motion to investigate a ban on single use plastic bags. In 2008, at the strong urging of the plastics industry, the Board initiated a program through which stores were encouraged to voluntarily reduce the use of plastic bags; with the caveat that if benchmark reductions were not met, a ban would be considered. These benchmarks have not been met. The County has also completed the development of an Environmental Impact Report evaluating the impacts of a plastic bag ban. This EIR, which is being finalized in preparation for submittal to the Board, has determined that, contrary to claims by the plastics industry, there are no significant environmental impacts directly caused by banning single use plastic bags.

The County has also sponsored and supported Statewide single-use plastic bag legislation for the last three years. Each year the State Legislature has failed to adopt a comprehensive, uniform Statewide policy restricting single use plastic bags. Most recently, on June 1, 2010 the Board of Supervisors voted to support the passage of AB 1998. AB 1998, authored by local Assemblymember Julia Brownley, has already been approved by the state Assembly and is expected to be voted upon by the California Senate before the end of August. The bill would ban

the distribution of single-use plastic bags and allow for 40 percent post-consumer content recycled paper bags to be sold at cost at supermarkets, large retail pharmacies, and foodmarts. The bill does not impose new fees on consumers; instead it makes the cost of bags visible to consumers, who can then make their own decision to choose reusable bags and save money. Single-use plastic bags are already banned in many jurisdictions around the world and California's municipalities are preparing to do the same.

L.A. County Supervisors Zev Yaroslavsky and Mark Ridley-Thomas reaffirmed their commitment to bringing a local ban to a vote later this year, should the State once again fail to take action. "Although we believe strongly that a uniform Statewide policy on plastic bags is preferable, we cannot wait another year for Sacramento to act. If AB 1998 does not pass, Los Angeles County will not only consider passing an Ordinance, but will strongly encourage each of the 88 cities within Los Angeles County to enact similar bans."

L.A. County is joined by Marin County and the Cities of Berkeley, Manhattan Beach, Malibu, Pasadena, Richmond, San Francisco, San Jose and Santa Monica, among others, in moving forward with their own plastic bans.

###